## **STORMER, John Bird**

John Bird Stormer was born circa 1835, parentage unknown.

In 1857 he appeared in a court action for unpaid wages at Beechworth, Victoria, for paper hanging, which he was awarded.1

In 1861 he was a “Sydney Mail” newspaper agent at Kiandra, N.S.W.2

In January 1864 he was appointed a bailiff of the District Court at Young, N.S.W.3

On 1st April 1865 John Bird Stormer took over as proprietor of the newspaper **The Burrangong Argus and Burrowa, Murrumburrah, and Binalong General Advertiser** (Volume 1 No. 24). The “Burrangong Argus” newspaper and general printing office was located in Main-street, Young. On sale from the office were the latest available English and Irish periodicals & newspapers.

John Stormer conducted it for some years, then disposed of it to Mr B. J. Bennett.

In 1865 he was also the secretary of the Burrangong Lodge of St. John, as well as being on the hospital committee.4

On 4th May 1869, at St. Peter’s Church, Melbourne, by special license, John B. Stormer, of Young, N.S.W., married Isabel, second daughter of Mr. T. Browne, of Fitzroy, Melbourne, late deputy superintendent of Tasman’s Peninsula [Tasmania].

Isabel, late of Hobart, Tasmania, was the eldest daughter of Thomas and Mary Browne.5

By December 1871 he had severed his association with the *Burrangong Argus* and had started up the *Gulgong Argus* journal as proprietor and editor.6

In May 1872 Mr. Stormer began issuing the Gulgong Argus as a daily evening paper. In July 1873 he took over the plant and goodwill of the *Guardian* newspaper which was incorporated with the *Argus*.

In 1875, at Gulgong, his wife Isabel was associated with the Church of England.

On 2nd March 1877 a son [John B. Stormer] was born at Gulgong.

In September 1877, Mr. Stormer, the proprietor of the Gulgong Evening Argus, became an inmate of the Mudgee Gaol undergoing treatment for lunacy. He was sent here by an order of the Gulgong Bench, who considered the Mudgee Gaol as likely to afford more advantages for successful treatment, and consequently a better chance of speedy recovery. It is believed that grief has been the principal agent in bringing about this mental affliction. Whether this was the result of the death of his recently born son is unclear as there is no death registered or recorded.

In December 1877 Mr. Stormer closes the Gulgong Argus and moved to Dubbo where he started a new newspaper.

In July 1878 Mr. Stormer resigned as a Trustee of land at Gulgong, dedicated as the site for a Church of England Church.7

In 1878 John Stormer started the *“Dubbo* *Express*” tri-weekly newspaper, first from Macquarie-street, later from a small office in Wingewarra street, not far from the corner of Macquarie street. However Mr. Stormer and his company had an uphill battle to fight against their opponents. His content policy was at that time edited by one of the most brilliant journalists in the Colony—the late W. K. Morgan, whose writing and incisive comments, under the nom de guerre of "Will Honeycomb," published weekly.

In June 1880, his brother-in-law, Thomas Browne, newspaper compositor, a young man, died at Mr. Stormer’s home, where he was residing, of a burst blood vessel.8

In May 1881 he was residing Lamont-terrace, Redfern-street, Redfern.9

On 3rd March 1883, at her residence, 57 Pitt-street, Redfern, Isabel, the wife of John Bird Stormer, died aged 41 years.10

On 13th November 1884, John Bird Stormer married Ada Pearce at St. Paul’s Church, Burwood. Ada J. Pearce was the daughter of Frank and Annie.11

Children of the marriage were:

A son, John Gordon, was born on 20th August 1885 at “Alsatia,” Redmyre [Strathfield]. On 30th November 1888, at Prince Alfred Hospital, this child, aged 3 years and 3 months, died of diphtheria.12

In June 1886 John Stormer was appointed manager of the *Church of England Record* publication, ‘conducted on the lines of the Protestant Reformed Church of England.’13

A son, William Edward Stuart, was born on 5th March 1888 at “Juanita,” Botany-street, Waverley. On 9th December 1888 this child died at home.14

On 8th December 1889 the mother of Mrs. J. B. Stormer, of Botany-street, Waverley, Annie Pearce, died at her son’s residence, King-street, Newtown.15

A daughter, Edith A. W., was born on 20th December 1889 at the family residence, Botany-street, Waverley. Her later whereabouts is unknown.16

On 1st February 1895, at her residence, “Keith Cottage,” Beecroft, Ada Stormer, wife of John Bird Stormer, died aged 54 years.17

On 5th August 1896, at his residence, “Keithcote,” Beecroft, John Bird Stormer, died aged 60 years.18

**Bibliography**

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9 New South Wales Police Gazette and Weekly Record of Crime, Wed 1 Jun 1881

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11 Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser, Sat 27 Dec 1884

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17 The Australian Star (Sydney, NSW), Wed 5 Feb 1895

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